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ENG 4905-001: Studies in Youth Literature

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4905-001

English 4905-001

Studies in Youth Literature:

From the Funny Papers, to Comic Books, to Graphic Novels

Spring 2014

Children's Literature

TTR 9:30-10:45 Coleman Hall 3691

Prof. John David Moore

Office: Coleman Hall 3771

Office Hours: TTR 8:00-9:30; 11:00-12:30 & by Appointment ***E-mail:**
jdmoore@eiu.edu

**The English Department Faculty no longer has land line phones. Contact me by e-mail before 9 pm if you want a reply before sometime the next day.*

Textbook

Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics*

Anthologies

Art Spiegelman, ed. *The Toon Treasury of Classic Children's Comics*

Literature

John Stanley & Irving Tripp, *Little Lulu: The Dig Dipper Club and other Sotries*

Shigeru Mizuki, *Nonnonba*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

Daniel Clowes, *Ghost World*

Howard Zinn, Mike Konopacki & Paul Buhle, *A People's History of American Empire*

Winsor McKay, *Little Nemo in Slumberland, 1912-1913*

Shannon Hale, Dean Hale & Nathan Hale, *Rapunzel's Revenge*

Matt Dembecki, ed. *Trickster: Native American Tales, A Graphic Collection*

Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*

Course Description

This class will explore what has at times constituted a forbidden, underground realm of Children's Literature. Scorned by librarians, condemned by teachers, damned by clergymen, and finally even investigated in televised hearings by Congress, comic books, together with their more respectable cousins, the newspaper funny papers, have contributed significantly to youth culture. With the arrival of the comic book's educated literary uncle, the graphic novel, the genre has gained the sort of serious attention we will be pursuing in this course. We'll be looking at the good, the bad, and the possibly ugly as we follow a children's "sub-literary" genre on its journey to respectability. Readings will range from the early examples by Winsor McCay (*Little Nemo in Slumberland*), to a teen-angst saga by Daniel Clowes (*Ghost World*). Along the way we will pay our respects to Donald Duck, Uncle Scrooge, Little Lulu, Pogo, graphic treatments of Native American trickster tales, Shaun Tan's wordless book, *The Arrival*, and much else. We will also examine comic books in instructional and propaganda roles (*Pip*, *The Magic Safety Elephant!*), graphic novel versions of other literary works, and examples of graphic biography and history. Students will engage in much discussion, oral presentations, brief response writing, a major research paper, and a final exam.

Course Calendar

Week I Jan. 14-16

T Introduction to the Course. Graphic forms and comics history/comics culture

TR Reading: McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, (Ch. 1); McKay, *Little Nemo in Slumberland*.

Week II Jan. 21-23

Mischief Makers

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 2); Sheldon Mayer, *Sugar and Spike* (Spiegelman 19-28; 73-74). Wiseman & Toole, *Dennis the Menace* (Spiegelman 29-37; 75-78); Seuss/Eastman, *Gerald McBoing Boing* (Spiegelman 333- 344)

TR Reading: Sheldon Meyer, *Scribbly* (Spiegelman 61-67); Andre LeBlanc, *Intellectual Amos* (Spiegelman 69-72); Dan Gordon, *Anthony the Rogue* (Spiegelman 109-114)

Week III Jan. 28-30

Funny Animals and Others

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 3); Gelman & Dressler, *Nutsy Squirrel* (Speigelman 95-100; Walt Kelly, *Pogo* (Speigelman 101-108); Jim Davis, *The Fox and the Crow* (Speigelman 121-130)

TR Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 4); John Stanley, *Jigger* (Speigelman 154-159); Frank Thomas, *Billy and Bonny Bee* (Speigelman 229-234); Sheldon Mayer, *J. Rufus Lion* (Speigelman 285-290); Dan Arr, *Flip and Flopper* (Speigelman 301-306; Dan Noonan, *Rover* (Speigelman 149-153)

Week IV Feb. 4-6

Middle-Class Ducks

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 5); Carl Barks, *Donald Duck*, "Hypno-Gun" (Speigelman 131-140)

TR Reading: Carl Barks, *Donald Duck*, "Bee Bumbler" (Speigelman 241-250)

Week V Feb. 11-13

Folk/Fairy Tales & Ghost Stories

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 6); Tom McNamara, *Alix in Folly-Land* (Speigelman 163-166; George Carlson, *The Pie-Face Prince of Old Pretzleburg* (Speigelman 167-174); John Stanley, *Tubby*, (Speigelman 207-216)

TR Reading: Dembicki, ed. *Trickster* (5-122)

Week VI Feb. 18-20

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 7); *Trickster* (123-222)

TR Reading: Hale, Hale & Hale, *Rapunzel's Revenge*.

Week VII Feb. 25-27

Girls versus Boys

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 8); Stanley & Tripp, *Little Lulu: The Big Dipper Club and Other Stories*

TR Reading: *Little Lulu* Continued; Bob Bolling, *Little Archie* (Spiegelman 39-44)
Midterm Paper Due

Week VIII Mar. 4-6

Fantasy and Adventure

T Reading: McCloud, (Ch. 9); Carl Barks, *Uncle Scrooge* (Spiegelman 252-273); Ariel Dorfman, *How to Read Donald Duck* (Excerpt, Handout)

TR Reading: Tan, *The Arrival*; Crockett Johnson, *Barnaby* (Handout)

Spring Break: Mar. 11-13

Week IX Mar. 18-20

Graphic Autobiography, Manga, etc.

T Reading: Shigeru Mizuki, *Nonnonba*

TR Reading: *Nonnonba*, Continued

Week X Mar. 25-27

T Reading: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

TR Reading: *Persepolis*, Continued

Week XI Ap. 1-3

Graphic Non-Fiction: Subversive History

T Reading: Zinn, et al., *A People's History of American Empire* (Ch. 1-6)

TR Reading: *A People's History* (Ch. 7-12)

Week XII Ap. 8-10

T Reading: Comics as propaganda and instruction (Sample Handouts?)

Modern Teens

TR Reading: Daniel Clowes, *Ghost World*

Week XIII Ap. 15-17

T Reading: *Ghost World*, Continued. First Student Presentation

TR Student Presentations

Week XIV Ap. 22-24

T Student Presentations

Week XV Ap. 29-May 1

T Student Presentations

TR Student Presentations LAST CLASS DAY

Final Paper Due

Course Requirements/Assignments

Regular written reading responses: Observations or Discussion Questions

For each class session you will turn in a typewritten response that may be in the form of a developed question or one or two observations on the assigned reading that invite class discussion, analysis and reflection. **NOTE:** Plot summaries are not responses; no summaries are allowed! These must be one page minimum and will

be graded on the basis of their clarity, usefulness and evidence of attentive and thoughtful reading of the assigned texts. Each class session will begin with one student reading his or her response aloud to start discussion. You will receive grades for these responses twice before mid-term and twice before the end of the semester.

Short Midterm Paper

A six page analytic review of a comic or graphic work of your choice. The selection must not be included on our reading list and should be appropriate to young, pre-adolescent, or young adult readers. Details will be forthcoming.

Researched Conference Paper

A final 8-10 page researched and appropriately documented that focuses on some aspect of your more general class presentation, written with the purpose of delivering it to an audience of primary, middle-school, or high school teachers. Details will be forthcoming.

Class Presentation

A 35 minute presentation on an aspect of comics/graphic novels not fully covered or covered at all in the course syllabus. A list of possibilities for selection will be forthcoming.

Final Essay Exam

Participation

This includes the effort you put into your presentation and delivery of thoughtful reading responses, but more importantly it has to do with the regularity of your day to day contributions to discussion, answering and asking questions, responding thoughtfully to the contributions of others, feeling free to express

disagreement, and paying respectful attention to the discussion taking place in class. Grades will be adjusted up or down on the basis of participation.

Grades

Final grades will be determined by averaging the following grades, all of which count equally: Midterm Paper grade, Final Paper Grade, Presentation Grade, Final Exam Grade, Composite (averaged) grade for response writing.

Grading is on a four-point scale: A 4.0-3.6; B 3.5-2.5; C 2.4-1.4; D 1.3- 0.3; F 0.2-0.0.

Graduate Credit: Students enrolled to receive graduate credit will consult with me about writing an extra 6-8 page paper on a topic we agree upon.

Policies, Rules, Regulations

- 1.) Late Work: No late work will be accepted unless you have made suitable arrangements with me BEFORE the due date. "Before" means at least 24 hour notice.
- 2.) **You must complete all major assignments to pass the course.**
- 3.) Attendance: Obviously required. Four *un*-excused absences will result in the loss of half a letter grade, eight un-excused absences will result in loss of a whole letter grade, ten unexcused absences result in loss of one and one-half letter grades. If you accumulate more than ten absences, excused or not, you should consider dropping the course since you will have missed roughly a third or more of the semester and shouldn't expect anything better than a D should you remain in the class. If you need to miss class due to illness, a university event or other legitimately excusable reason, you should notify me as soon as possible and be prepared to provide documentation of the situation. (Otherwise I won't be able to keep track of how often your grandmother dies).
- 4.) *Paper Grading*: Since this is an upper-division college course, I must assume an advanced command of writing mechanics/grammar, and acceptable usage. Ten or more errors in these areas within the first two pages of a paper means I stop reading and the paper gets a D.

- 5.) Plagiarism: English Department Statement on Plagiarism: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – ‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ – has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.” In less severe forms plagiarism may involve problematic citations and paraphrases that, though they suggest honest attempts to satisfy academic standards, will require revision before a grade can be assigned. Until documentation is corrected, the assignment's grade will remain a zero. NOTE: Consultants at **The Writing Center** can help you with the mechanics of correct quotation, paraphrase, summary, and citation of primary and secondary sources. They will also be happy to work with you on any other writing difficulties that may be threatening the acceptability of your work. Call for an appointment (581-5929) or drop in (CH3110) and be sure to bring materials – assignment sheet, drafts, copies of sources – with you. The Writing Center's hours are Monday through Thursday 9 am – 3 pm & 6—9 pm, and 9 am – 1 pm Fridays.
- 6.) MLA Style: Use MLA (Modern Language Association) style for the layout of your paper and for the documentation on your Works Cited page, and for the in-text citations referring readers to this list.
- 7.) Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible so we can work out appropriate accommodations.
- 8.) Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English department professors with the yellow form: "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach." These are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Donna Binns (CH3851). The sooner you get these to your professors the better.